

REMARKS

Applicants have considered the November 3, 2006 Office Action, and the comments that follow are presented in a bona fide effort to address all issues raised in that Action and thereby place this case in condition for allowance. Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. In response to the Office Action dated November 3, 2006, Applicants submit concurrently herewith, a certified English translation of Japanese Patent Application No. JP2002-245144, filed on August 26, 2002. Applicants submit that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue or require any further search or consideration. Entry of the present Amendment is respectfully solicited under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. It is believed that this response places this case in condition for allowance. Hence, prompt favorable reconsideration of this case is solicited.

Claims 1, 4-12 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roh (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2003/0072996, hereinafter Roh). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roh in view of Dahlstrand et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 3,208,772). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claims 13 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roh in view of Nakagawa et al. (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2003/0232237). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claims 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roh in view of Nakagawa et al. and further in view of Wariishi et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,406,817). Applicants respectfully traverse.

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Roh qualifies as “prior art” under section 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) since the applied U.S. application was published on April 17, 2003, prior to the filing date of the present Application, which was filed with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office on August 21, 2003.

The present Application claims foreign priority (35 U.S.C. § 119) to Japanese Application No. JP 2002-245144, filed on August 26, 2002. A certified copy of Japanese Application No. 2002-245144 was previously submitted on August 21, 2003.

Submitted concurrently herewith, is a certified English translation of Japanese Application No. 2002-245144. Therefore, Applicants are entitled to the effective filing date of August 26, 2002, which predates the U.S. filing date of Roh. The remaining secondary and tertiary references fail to teach or remotely suggest every limitation of independent claims 1 and 20 as well as dependent claims 2-19. Accordingly, the rejections under § 103 are not legally viable and should be withdrawn.

It is believed that pending claims 1-20 are now in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request an early and favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application. If there are any outstanding issues which might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner’s amendment, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants’ representative at the telephone number shown below.

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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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